



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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Department Name: Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services

Name of Project: Public Health Laboratory

Amount of Funding Requested from the Federal Government: \$5,000,000

Source of Funds: HRSA Health Facilities Construction and Equipment account

Related Policy Bills:

Project Justification:

Humboldt County needs a new Public Health laboratory to protect the environment and people of Northern California. The current laboratory, one of only 29 remaining in the state, is in a 100-year-old, repurposed building and aging modular units in a parking lot that don't have the space or power to run modern equipment. From water quality and shellfish testing to bio-terrorist threats, Public Health protects us. A new, updated laboratory space will ensure the rural North Coast's health and safety for decades to come.

Project Description:

Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services Public Health has one of only 29 public health laboratories remaining in California. The laboratory provides vital clinical and environmental testing for the rural and remote region of Humboldt, Del Norte, and western Trinity Counties, and is [an active participant in the Laboratory Response Network Reference Lab for Bioterrorism](#) threats in Northern California. Environmental services provided by the Public Health laboratory support rural households who rely on wells for drinking water and conduct regulatory testing for beaches and the local shellfish farming industry.

The laboratory facility is in a nearly 100-year-old building that was never designed to be a laboratory space. This repurposed building (once housing Juvenile Hall) has been adapted to accommodate the laboratory as best possible given the location, age and condition of the building; however, the much-needed expansion of laboratory capabilities, including Biosafety Levels certification, is impossible in the current location. The building is wholly inadequate to the space and power demands of modern equipment. A modular BSL-3 laboratory space that was installed in the parking lot 20 years ago has reached the end of its life expectancy and is degrading significantly, resulting in escalating costs to keep the facility repaired and functional.

Replacing an outdated building with a modern public health laboratory is essential to protecting the environment and people of Northern California.

Funding will support the construction costs of building a new 10,000 sq. ft. Public Health Laboratory Facility – a purpose-built space utilizing new and emerging laboratory technology for clinical and environmental testing and bioterrorism response programs.



Total Cost to Complete the Project (Federal AND Non-Federal Funds) (State AND Non-State Funds):

Total project cost is **\$26,400,000**. The cost estimate accommodates the planned 10,000 square foot design and includes cost escalators based on projected construction cost increases.

DOGE rescission - In March 2025, \$2,150,000 in secured CDC Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) Funding for this project was unilaterally rescinded by DOGE.

Secured Funding:

- CDC Advanced Molecular Detection (AMD) Sequencing & Analytics COVID Funding (secured): \$2,150,000
- County/state realignment funds (secured): \$10,500,000

Funding request (seeking): \$5,000,000.

The County is seeking remaining project funding through loan financing and smaller philanthropy funding. The requested federal aid will leverage previously secured funding, County general fund and public health fund to successfully secure financing.

Can the County Obligate all Requested Funding Within 12 Months of Receipt?:

YES

List of Stakeholder Groups or Elected Officials who Support the Project:

California State Assembly Member Chris Rogers (requesting)

California State Senator Mike McGuire (requesting)

Health Officers Association of California (requesting)

Open Door Community Health Centers (requesting)

Providence St. Joseph Health (requesting)

North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network (requesting)

NOTE: Congressman Jared Huffman [toured the current laboratory facility in July, 2021](#)

Estimated Project Start Date:

7/1/21 – Project planning began in 2021 with site location identified and cost distribution schedule completed. Property was purchased in January 2024. Construction is planned to begin April 2026.

Estimated Project Completion Date:

10/31/2027 - Full project completion is estimated to be October 2027

Congressionally directed funding will be obligated within 12-months of receipt

Current Developmental Status of the Project:

Project Phases & Cost Distribution Schedule has been completed



Secured CDC grant funding (totaling \$2.1 million) and county public health funding (\$10.5 million)
Project site location has been purchased; Congressionally directed funding will NOT be used to acquire
land, purchase existing buildings, or to pay salaries or other operating or ongoing costs.

Contact Information:

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Agency:	County of Humboldt, Department of Health and Human Services Public Health		
Project:	Humboldt County Public Health Laboratory Facility		
Budget Breakdown:			
Revenue Source	Amount	Project Budget	Comments
Federal	\$2,100,000	CDC ELC & AMD Sequencing & Analytics Funding	Funding from CDC to CA Dept of Public Health, awarded to county in 2021
State/Local	\$24,300,000	County general fund, public health fund, Loan financing and small philanthropy commitments will cover the remainder, primarily construction costs.	Requested federal aid will allow the county to successfully secure additional financing.
	\$26,400,000	Total	
	19,250,000	County match (if any)	
	\$5,000,000	Federal aid needed	
Has the project previously received any federal, state, or private funding, including federal discretionary grants and/or formula funding? If yes, how much, from what source, and when?			
Response:	CDC made Advanced Molecular Detection funding available to states; the county was awarded \$2,150,000 by the CA Dept of Public Health 12/2021		
	DOGE rescinded: CDC made Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases funding available to states; the county was awarded \$2,150,000 in funding by the CA Dept of Public Health in 3/2021. This funding was rescinded by DOGE in March 2025.		